

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

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R 011644Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6036

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL BELFAST

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LONDON PLS PASS TO BELFAST

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, EI, UK (NI)

SUBJECT: PROVISIONAL SINN FEIN CONVENTION

SUMMARY: ANNUAL CONVENTION OF PROVISIONAL SINN FEIN DID NOTHING TO CLARIFY PROVOS' POLITICAL THINKING, BUT IT DID SHOW THAT THEY FEAR PRECIPITATE BRITISH WITHDRAWAL FROM NI. END SUMMARY.

1. PROVISIONAL SINN FEIN HELD ITS ANNUAL CONVENTION (ARD-GHEIS) IN DUBLIN OVER WEEKEND SEPTEMBER 28-29. MAIN PUBLIC POLICY STATEMENT CAME FROM PRESIDENT RUAIRI O BRADAIGH. HE SPOKE FOR "REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT" IN FIRST PERSON PLURAL, & LISTENERS MUST HAVE UNDERSTOOD THAT HE WAS SPEAKING FOR PROVISIONAL IRA AS WELL AS SINN FEIN.

2. MOST STRIKING FEATURE OF O BRADAIGH'S PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS WAS APPEAL TO BRITISH NOT TO MAKE "SECRET OR SUDDEN WITHDRAWAL" FROM NI "WITHOUT PROPER PLANS AND PREPARATIONS.... WHAT WE WANT LEAST OF ALL IS ANOTHER CONGO SITUATION." HAVING SAID THIS, O BRADAIGH REITERATED ANCIENT SINN FEIN REQUEST FOR BRITISH DECLARATION OF INTENT TO WITHDRAW FROM ALL OF IRELAND.

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3. REMAINDER OF SPEECH WAS ROUTINE. O'BRADAIGH GAVE NO INDICATION THAT PROVOS MIGHT BE CONSIDERING CEASE FIRE IN NORTHERN IRELAND. HE CALLED FOR A "DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST" IRELAND IN LONG TERM BUT DID NOT GIVE NEW DETAILS. HE DID, HOWEVER, CONDEMN POLICY OF ATTRACTING FOREIGN CAPITAL TO IRELAND, AND HE REITERATED SINN FEIN'S TRADITIONAL ANTI-EC POSITION.

4. AT LAST YEAR'S CONVENTION, TOP IRA LEADER DAITHI O CONAILL MADE SURPRISE APPEARANCE, ELUDING SECURITY FORCES -- TO EMBARRASSMENT OF GOI. THIS YEAR, MASSIVE POLICE FORCE WAS PRESENT, AND THERE WAS NO REPETITION OF THE ADVENTURE. THERE WAS ALSO NO REFERENCE TO THE SPECTACULAR BUT ABORTIVE ATTEMPT TO BOMB NORTHERN IRELAND FROM A SMALL PLANE HIGHJACKED IN THE REPUBLIC SEPTEMBER 28.

5. PRESS REPORTS ELECTION OF FOLLOWING SINN FEIN OFFICERS FOR NEXT YEAR. THERE APPEAR TO BE NO MAJOR CHANGES.

PRESIDENT -- RUAIR O BRADAIGH (RORY BRADY) OF ROSCOMMON

VICE PRESIDENTS -- MRS. MAIRE DRUMM OF BELFAST
DAITHI O CONAILL (DAVID O'CONNELL) OF DUBLIN

SECRETARIES -- NIAL O FAOGAIN (NEIL FAGAN) OF DUBLIN
UALTAR O LOINSIGH (WALTER LYNCH) OF DUBLIN
TREASURERS -- ANTHONY RUANE OF DUBLIN
CHARLES MCGLADE OF DUBLIN

COMMITTEE -- SEAN O BRADAIGH (SEAN BRADY) OF DUBLIN
JOHN JOE MCGIRL OF LEITRIM
GERRY ADAMS OF BELFAST
MARY MCGUIGAN OF BELFAST
RICHARD BEHAL OF KILKENNY
MALACHY FOOTS OF BELFAST
MRS. MARY DEVLIN OF TYRONE
MRS. MAURA MOORE OF BELFAST

SINCE THREE COMMITTEE MEMBERS ARE IMPRISONED THREE SUBSTITUTES WERE ALSO CHOSEN:

BARNEY MCFADDEN OF DERRY
DONAL O SIOCHAIN OF CORK
VINCENT CONLON OF MONAGHAN

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5. COMMENT: ON AT LEAST ONE EARLIER OCCASION, O BRADAIGH APPEALED TO BRITISH NOT TO MAKE PRECIPITATE WITHDRAWAL FROM NORTHERN IRELAND. FACT THAT HE REITERATED REQUEST AT CONVENTION DOES NOT MEAN THAT SINN FEIN IS GOING SOFT ON BRITISH. IT DOES SHOW, HOWEVER, THAT SINN FEIN SERIOUSLY BELIEVES BRITISH MAY DECIDE TO ABANDON NORTHERN IRELAND IN A HURRY IN FAIRLY NEAR FUTURE. THIS IS ONE OF VERY FEW POINTS ON WHICH SINN FEIN AND GOI AGREE.

6. PROVOS ARE AVOIDING ANY CLARIFICATION OF THEIR IDEOLOGICAL POSITION. A FEW LOCAL COMMENTATORS BELIEVE THEY HAVE SWUNG TO FAR LEFT AND ARE CONCEALING FACT SO AS NOT TO OFFEND CONSERVATIVE AMERICAN SUPPORTERS. OTHER OBSERVERS THINK PROVOS ARE STILL RIGHT-WINGERS WHO MAKE OCCASIONAL, TRENDY LEFT-WING SOUNDS BECAUSE THEY FEEL A NEE TO COMPETE WITH OFFICIAL SINN FEIN. PENDING CLARIFICATION AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS, WE THINK SAFEST WORKING HYPOTHESIS MAY BE SIMPLY THAT PROVOS ARE TOO BUSY FIGHTING TO DEVOTE MUCH ENERGY TO POLITICAL THINKING. CERTAINLY IT IS THE CAMPAIGN OF VIOLENCE THAT KEEPS PROVOS IN THE NEWS AND IN CONTENTION FOR SOME SORT OF POWER. THEIR OCCASSIONAL POLITICAL FORAYS HAVE ACCOMPLISHED LITTLE, AND THEY MAY LACK ABILITY TO DO ANY DEEP THINKING.
MOORE

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